1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF15 East China
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since the Mongol conquest of China in 1279, the country had been almost continuously united until the middle of the nineteenth century, when the Taiping Rebellion opened the way for an upsurge of provincial autonomy.

G. The Seaward Orientation of Fukien

Handicapped by a mountainous terrain that increased the normal difficulties of farming and limited communication by land with the rest of China, Fukien tended to breed a highly individualistic and truculent people, strongly drawn toward the sea. They resisted the intrusion into the province of the imperial power and put their seamanship to whatever use promised the most advantage to themselves. Many coastal people emigrated to the South Seas and Southeast Asia, but the majority stayed home to engage in fishing, foreign and domestic trade, and fighting on the sea.

From the time of the T'ang Dynasty, and especially during the Sung Dynasty, what is today the port of Ch'üan-chou was one of the Chinese Empire's principal foreign trade centers.[21] During and after the time of the Sung, natives of Fukien contributed a high proportion of the sailors in China's merchant

21. Latourette, op. cit., pp. 205, 250.

706 and naval fleets. With the beginning of naval modernization in the 1860's, the establishment of a naval shipyard and academy at Foochow enabled natives of Fukien to gain a nepotistic monopoly on the Chinese navy. It was under the command of Sah (Sa) Chen-ping, whose home was in Foochow, during the last years of the Ch'ing Dynasty. He maintained control even after his retirement until his death in 1951, opportunistically placing the navy at the service of the Republic, various warlords, the Nationalist Government, and the Communist regime.[22]

579 Another use to which the people of Fukien put their seamanship and fighting ability was piratical raiding of rich farming and trade centers within access of the sea, particularly the area around the Yangtze estuary. During the Ming Dynasty (1368 to 1644), the natives of Fukien along with Japanese and persons of mixed ancestry operating from bases in Japan constituted a serious menace to the people and wealth of coastal China. When the foreign havens of the freebooters were eliminated by Japan's self-isolation at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the raiders continued their forays from Chinese offshore islands and isolated inlets in Fukien and northern Kwangtung.

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22. Percy Finch, Shanghai and Beyond, New York, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1953, pp. 127-28.